Tasha Rasmussen

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Philosophy of Education

I believe that every child is a unique individual with a distinct set of motivations and interests. Each child is raised in a family with a slightly different set of cultural values, practices, and beliefs. However, every individual child deserves requisite care and support to foster his or her growth in a secure, loving environment. Schools and the teachers that comprise them must provide a foundation system for attending children grounded in “care-relations” (Noddings, 2005), whereby the teacher attends to and is receptive of the intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of the child. The goal of the teacher should be to provide students with a deep knowledge base that is meaningful and relevant, to foster the development of requisite skills that enable students to pursue in their individual aspirations, and to encourage dispositions that are conducive to developing as a responsible, moral, and persevering individual and global citizen.

The learning that occurs within a classroom should provide students with a knowledge base that enables students to be active, astute, and tolerant members of their surrounding community. Within Special Education, this knowledge should be focused on the needs, intrinsic interests, and learning style preferences of each individual student. In developing student curriculums, the Special Education teacher must scaffold students in meeting goals and objectives that enable the student to succeed as active, capable members of their classroom. This curriculum should be relevant and meaningful to the challenges and aspirations of the student, enabling students to increase competency. Through overcoming academic, emotional, and physical obstacles to learning, the teachers should help students to see the world as one of opportunity and possibility.

In order to foster the growth of students who are capable of pursuing their aspirations, it is essential that they acquire certain necessary skills. Particularly within Special Education, it is crucial that teachers attend to the *specific* needs of the individual student. Skills should enable greatest competency in the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical challenges faced by students. As such, the IEPs of students must be established and adhered to with fidelity, as well as routinely reassessed to ensure that the student needs are being met as effectively, efficiently and thoroughly as possible.

To guide student learning that enables greater academic, emotional, and physical competency, the teacher must foster certain student dispositions conducive to achievement and happiness*.* Effort and perseverance are important character traits to promote in students with special needs. Through effort and perseverance, the accomplishments that can be made are momentous, and teachers must resonate such belief in their students. Curiosity and engagement with learning also should be promoted through directing student learning with meaningful curriculums. Through finding ways to connect learning to the intrinsic interests of individual students, the teacher can promote learning as a lifelong endeavor. Teachers must also foster the development of students as moral, empathic, responsible citizens. Students should understand their individual rights, as well as those of others, and be capable of engaging in reciprocal relationships of care and trust. Lastly, the teacher must encourage feelings of confidence and capability within students. Confidence enables students to thirst for greater knowledge and to embrace challenge. Confidence also helps students to feel positive about the rewards of hard work and continuous effort.

In order to provide an education for students that is meaningful, supportive, and empowering, the teacher must routinely assess the effectiveness of her instruction The teacher must be authentic in her belief in student potential, and nurture student growth with fidelity. The teacher must be accountable to his or her beliefs, and actively strive to foster students who feel capable of and desire to improve themselves and our greater world.

References

Noddings, N. (2005) ‘Caring in education’, *the encyclopedia of informal education,*

<http://www.infed.org/biblio/noddings_caring_in_educationhtm>.